Proposal to upgrade Porbandar-Bhavnagar Customs Collectorate

1249. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to upgrade the Porbandar-Bhavnagar, Bhuj customs collectorate or to bifurcate Rajkot customs collectorate in order to contain smuggling in this coastal area;

(b) whether it is a fact that these offices are facing acute shortage of modern equipments;

(c) whether Government have sanctioned additional budget in this regard; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) There is no such proposal under consideration of Government at present.

(b) to (d) The requirements of equipment for anti-smuggling purposes are assessed/monitored on a continuous basis. Porbandar, Bhavnagar and Bhuj Divisions are reportedly not facing any acute shortage of such equipment.

Manufacturing of Codeine Phosphate

1250. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI :

SHRI RADHAKISHAN MALAVIYA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Codeine Phosphate is being manufactured at Government Opium and Alkaloid Works, Neemuch and Ghazipur;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Codeine Phosphate is being imported from foreign countries and in lieu of that India supplies them opium; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to meet our internal demand and stop importing the above codeine phosphate, which is a very costly item ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As the indigenous production of Codeine Phosphate manufactured at Government Opium and Alkaloid Works, Neemuch and Ghazipur is not adequate to meet our domestic demand, the shortfall of Codeine Phosphate is met through import against barter of opium.

(c) To increase domestic production of Codeine Phosphate, Government of India has recently approved running of Neemuch alkaloid plant on one additional shift.

Excess cultivation of Opium

1251. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI :

SHRI RADHAKISHAN MALAVIYA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that excess cultivation of Opium is being done by the opium farmers over and above the licenced area since the last 4/5 years in connivance with the field staff of Narcotics Department as a result of which the field staff have earned enormous amount in the shape of bribe from popy cultivators and that some excess cultivation has been detected only this year; and

(b) if so, what are the details of action taken or proposed to be taken against the concerned corrupt officials ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) and (b) During the last 4-5 years, some stray instances of excess cultivation of opium poppy have come to notice. Action is taken in such cases by delicensing the cultivators and initiating disciplinary proceedings against the defaulting staff. However, there is no evidence that in such cases the field staff earned enormous amount in the shape of bribe from poppy cultivators.